

Irish Washerwoman / Dark-Eyed Sailor

Irish Washerwoman

AFS 1007 B1

I will tell you a story, as I heard it told, About a good woman, not young or not old. She was fair, fat and forty and hung out a sign, Which read, "Wash by the day, have a look at my line." Her yard, it was full of a goodly array, Of fine linens and such she took in by the day. She'd rub and she'd wring and hang them to dry, For people to see as they slowly pass by.

It was said, cross the street in a regular store, Was a "chink" in the business, which made Biddy sore. They'd been rivals for years and one plainly could see, That a time sure would come, when a scrap there would be. Sing Lee was the name that hung on the board, The "heathen Chinese," with his prices soared. One day [she?] called on the widow and said, "Me go [in?] with you Ali under one head."

She beat "Ali the chink," there were four miles around, Her prices were fair, and she stood her own ground. She laughed and she'd joke in her rich Irish brogue, She'd cheer up her callers, this bit of a rogue. They'd sit down and eat with a bucket of suds, A bit of a stew and a dish of old spuds. She bought him a hood, and a good Irish smoke, And broke his old pipe, that he hit up with dope.

But Biddy was wise, she agreed to his plan, And laid down the law by this sly Chinaman. On her wall was a note, to be faced every day, It was "Erin go Brau," and the Irish hold sway. They built up a trade, and it kept up too, Bought an auto, it's green and ??? real new. I know this is true, 'twas told me by Biddy, Herself, who is now Mrs. Sing Sing Lee.

Dark-Eyed Sailor

AFS 1007 B2

It was a comely young lady fair, Was walking out to take the air. She met a canaler upon the way, So I paid attention, so I paid attention, To hear what they did say.

“Fair maid,” said he, “while you roam alone, The night is coming and the day's far gone.” She drew a dagger and then did cry, “For my dark-eyed canaler, for my dark-eyed canaler, Though may he live or die.”

“My every hope is based on him, True love will wait, true love will win.” She said, while tears from her eyes did fall, “’Tis my dark eyed canaler, ’tis my dark eyed canaler, Approving my downfall.”

His coal black eyes and curly hair, His flattering tongue, my heart ensnared. [Gentle?] was he, no rake like you, To advise a maiden, to advise a maiden, To slight the jacket blue.

It is six long years since he left our boat, Double ring he took and gently broke. He left his [token?] his hat you see, And the other he's keeping, And the other he's keeping, to remind him most of me.

Cried William, “Drive him from off your mind, May as good a canaler as him you'll find.” Love turned aside and cold it grew, Like a winter's morning, like a winter's morning, When the hills are glad with snow.